

## CLAIMS:

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1. A data carrier (1) which includes  
receiving means (5) for receiving a modulated carrier signal (MTS) which contains a data  
signal (DS1) encoded in conformity with an encoding method (MA, PW, MI, RTZ, FSK,  
PSK), and  
5 demodulation means (9) for demodulating the received modulated carrier signal (MTS) and  
for outputting the encoded data signal (DS1) contained therein, and  
decoding means (10, 20) for decoding the encoded data signal (DS1) and for outputting data  
(D1, D2), and  
10 data processing means (11) for processing the data (D1, D2) output by the decoding means  
(10, 20),  
characterized in that  
the decoding means (10, 20) include at least a first decoding stage (12) and a second decoding  
stage (13), the first decoding stage (12) being arranged to decode a data signal (DS1) encoded  
in conformity with a first encoding method (RTZ) whereas the second decoding stage (13) is  
15 arranged to decode a data signal (DS1) encoded in conformity with a second encoding method  
(MI).

2. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the decoding  
means (10, 20) include a decision stage (14) which is arranged to decide which of the  
20 decoding stages (12, 13) is suitable to decode a received encoded data signal (DS1).

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3. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that the decision stage  
(14) can receive decision supporting information (EUI1, EUI2) from at least one of the at least  
two decoding stages (12, 13), and that the decision stage (14) is arranged to decide, by  
25 evaluation of the decision supporting information (EUI1, EUI2) applied thereto, which of the  
decoding stages (12, 13) is suitable to decode a received encoded data signal (DS1).

4. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that the data carrier  
(1) is arranged to receive a modulated carrier signal (MTS) which contains an encoded data

signal (DS1) containing decoding stage instruction information (BI), and that the decision stage (14) is arranged to decide, by evaluation of the decoding stage instruction information (BI) applied thereto, which of the decoding stages (12, 13) is arranged to decode an encoded data signal (DS1) that can be received next.

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5. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the decoding means (10, 20) include a storage stage (15) in which a received encoded data signal (DS1) can be stored prior to the decoding by one of the at least two decoding stages (12, 13), or in which data output by at least one of the at least two decoding stages (12, 13) can be stored after the decoding by these decoding stages (12, 13).

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6. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that, before the decision stage (14) can decide which of the decoding stages (12, 13) is suitable for the decoding of a received encoded data signal (DS1), data (D1) output by the first decoding stage (12) can be output to the data processing means (11) for further processing.

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7. A data carrier (1) as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the data carrier (1) includes encoding means (16) for outputting an encoded data signal (DS2), which encoding means include at least a first encoding stage (17) and a second encoding stage (18), the first encoding stage (17) being arranged to encode data (D3) in conformity with a third method (FSK) whereas the second encoding stage (18) is arranged to encode data (D3) in conformity with a fourth method (PSK), that the data carrier (1) includes modulation means (19) which are arranged to modulate the encoded data signal (DS2) output by the encoding means (16) and to output a modulated carrier signal (MTS), and that the data carrier (1) also includes transmission means (5) which are arranged to transmit the modulated carrier signal (MTS).

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